



In the Midnight heaven's burning  
Through the ethereal deeps afar  
Once I watch'd with restless yearning  
An alluring aureate star;  
Ev'ry eve aloft returning  
Gleaming nigh the Arctic Car.  
Mystic waves of beauty blended  
With the gorgeous golden rays  
Phantasies of bliss descended  
In a myrrh'd Elysian haze.  
In the lyre-born chords extended  
Harmonies of Lydian lays.  
And (thought I) lies scenes of pleasure,  
Where the free and blessed dwell,  
And each moment bears a treasure,  
Freighted with the lotos-spell,  
And there floats a liquid measure  
From the lute of Israfel.  
There (I told myself) were shining  
Worlds of happiness unknown,  
Peace and Innocence entwining  
By the Crowned Virtue's throne;  
Men of light, their thoughts refining  
Purer, fairer, than my own.  
Thus I mus'd when o'er the vision  
Crept a red delirious change;  
Hope dissolving to derision,  
Beauty to distortion strange;  
Hymnic chords in weird collision,  
Spectral sights in endless range....  
Crimson burn'd the star of madness  
As behind the beams I peer'd;  
All was woe that seem'd but gladness  
Ere my gaze with Truth was sear'd;  
Cacodaemons, mir'd with madness,  
Through the fever'd flick'ring leer'd....  
Now I know the fiendish fable  
Then the golden glitter bore;

Now I shun the spangled sable  
That I watch'd and lov'd before;  
But the horror, set and stable,  
Haunts my soul forevermore!

[image]

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